

179th members set standard at Silver Flag

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They say Rome wasn't built in a day and neither was the tent city. During a recent Silver Flag exercise in Panama City, Fla., the 179th Civil Engineering Squadron built their city in 14 hours.

Building the "city in a box" according to Lt. Col. Jay Williams, CES commander, is a requirement that CES members must complete every 45 months. The exercise, entitled Silver Flag, is designed to evaluate and elevate the proficiency of wartime civil engineering, services and PERSCO skills.

The exercise required a significant coordinated effort and began almost instantaneously. Upon arrival the camp commander was designated, a command and control center was created and work groups were formed according to Air Force specialty codes.

A total of 196 active duty and guard members participated in the exercise; 68 of those were from the 179th. Participants learned how to fully construct an airbase from a vacant piece of land and how to perform airfield damage repair. Each AFSC holder attended three full days of classroom training and played a part in practical learning activities. The training was all in preparation for a mock deployment exercise that would take place later in the week.

Long after classroom sessions ended, members of the CCC attended



Heavy repair team member engaged in Airfield Damage Repair (ADR) operations.



Structures team member installs purlins on the Alaskan Small Shelter System.

evening planning sessions. These sessions were designed to help ensure a smooth transition from their current forward deployed location to a bare base site.

The day of the mock deployment, members were required to show up at 5 a.m.. Bags were palletized, briefings were held, troops were loaded on buses and delivered to the exercise site and then the fun started.

They arrived to find a stretch of asphalt and boxes of deployable systems known as the Harvest Eagle Kit. The kit contains everything necessary for setting up a tent city.

"Immediately everyone scattered and began to do their jobs," said Williams. "A potable water source was identified, electrical power was established, showers and latrines went up and a field kitchen was unveiled. "There is a stacking plan, a domino effect. Everyone has to work in concert with others," Williams said.

To further add to the deployment scenario there were strict timelines

imposed and quality checks. The most important task however, was getting the airfield set up. One aspect of airfield set-up is the Expedient Air Lighting System. The EALS contains 4,800 feet of airfield lighting.

"All of the lights came on the first time. Our electricians were identified as being outstanding," said Williams.

"The EALS went up in record time. The branch cadre told us that had not happened in years. The cadre were impressed with our teamwork and communication," said Senior Master Sgt. James McCoy.

The 179th electricians weren't the only members of the unit recognized for exceptional performance. The readiness team received big kudos at the exercise out-brief for their innovative concept of operations plan. The existing plan, which allows for different mission oriented protective postures levels in different sectors of the base, was taken to a new level.

"The accuracy of our computerized plotting techniques, our knowledge of
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